

Tap children's talents to develop sports - First Lady

BY TOBBIAS JOLLY OWINY
& ISAAC OTWII
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Priority.

According to Ms Museveni, given the recent successes, sports should be given priority, to help the country develop young talent.

Education and Sports minister Janet Museveni has tasked Uganda Athletics Federation (UAF) to tap and develop talents

of children across the country for Uganda to celebrate more sporting glory.

Ms Museveni, who on Thursday launched the Athletics for Development Programme and the seventh National Kids Athletics and Special Needs Championship at Boma



Grounds in Apac Town, asked the district leaders to groom a pool of young talents into both national and international medallists.

"I want you to support these championships because kids' athletics and special needs athletics are practical and efficient tools for talent identification," she said.

"Sports federations in the country, especially UAF, should use this sports championship to identify talent and improve skills of these children because our latest achievements means we deserve more medals," Ms Museveni said in an apparent reference to Uganda's recent sporting success.

Uganda won six medals with three gold, one silver, and two bronze at the 2018 Commonwealth Games at the Gold Coast, Australia, last month.

Ms Museveni said Uganda is the first country to implement Athletics for Development with support from the German Athletics Association and UN children's agency Unicef.

The programme brings together several local and international bodies to promote development through sports.

But Mr Okwir Okello, the chairperson Uganda Primary Schools Sports and Games Association (UPSSGA), said development of talents in children has been frustrated by lack of funding.

This year's kids athletics championship has attracted 86 districts and municipalities with a total of 4,126 participants.

Uganda has more than 112 districts and 20 odd municipalities.

"Districts and municipalities are experiencing inadequacy of funding of kids' athletics right from schools up to national level without direct support from government. This has resulted in many local governments not tuning up for national championships," he said, adding that the department of physical education and sports in schools had greatly improved the teaching of physical education and sports in schools despite it being non-examinable.

German ambassador Dr Albrecht Conze, said his government was committed to integrating sports for development as a tool to achieve development in areas such as social cohesion and promotion of civic participation to realise the UN sustainable development goals.

"As partners, we believe that every child in Uganda should know sports. Sports is not about being the best, but it helps players to build respect for each other and forming a good character," Dr Albrecht said.

He expressed optimism that the collaboration will make Ugandan children more skilful as well as healthier.

About UPSSGA

The Uganda Primary Schools Sports and Games Association was founded in 1984 to identify, develop and promote talents from schools up to district and national level.

It has since inception, tapped developed and promoted many young talents.

Kids Athletics was founded in 2012 and first hosted by Mbarara District, Uganda is the

first country to implement Kids Athletics in the world.

It has successfully been sustained for the last six years, with the seventh edition hosted in Apac District.

Support. Ms Museveni (C) speaks to German ambassador Dr Albrecht Conze during the function in Apac District on Thursday.
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